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ABSTRACT

This project involved 50 members of a culturally disadvantaged group who had come to a neighborhood settlement house for help in obtaining and maintaining a job, and who were subsequently enrolled in a work preparation program at a large rehabilitation facility. The counselees were given the option of having or not having themselves videotaped during a number of simulated job interviews and trials; for the 44 who chose to be taped, their own behaviors were played back to them the day following each filming. No attempts to counsel the people were made, although many of them would, after watching themselves on tape, ask for advice about how they might go about being "more cool" in given situations. Following about 10 weeks of such playback experience, the majority of the counselees were able to get and hold jobs, and a six-month followup revealed that their chances of staying on a job were significantly better than those of another group of people from the same settlement house who had not been exposed to the opportunity to see a playback of their own behavior. Sepcifically, these individuals who had been afforded the opportunity to monitor their own behaiviors by videofeedback reported nearly 80 percent success in maintaining satisfactory vocational adjustment, while just over 50 percent of those who had not received this feedback were satisfactorily employed. (Author)

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"HELPING THE DISADVANTAGED CHOOSE THEIR OWN BEHAVIOR MODELS"

FROM 52nd ANNUAL MEETING, AMERICAN ORTHOPSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION, 1975

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All too often, programs for helping minority group members from culturally disadvantaged groups have taken the form of "talking down", whereby counselors have attempted to impose their own life styles and values on the people they were attempting to help. Although such counseling was generally done with altruistic motivation and with a genuine concern for the disadvantaged, it often carried the implied threat that the counselee must give at least token acceptance to the value system espoused by the counselor, or else he would somehow be considered a failure.

The use of videoplayback, increasingly used in training counselors and therapists see their own behaviors in the context of their professional behaviors, offers promise as a potential tool for letting minority group members see their own behavior in a number of situations, and then make their own decisions concerning which, if any, of their behaviors they might wish to modify or change.

This project involved fifty members of a culturally disadvantaged group who had come to a neighborhood settlement house for help in obtaining and maintaining a job, and who were subsequently enrolled in a work preparation program at a large rehabilitation facility. The counselees were given the option of having or not having themselves videotaped during a number of similated job interviews and trials, and, for the 44 who chose

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Perhaps of greater importance was the spontaneous interest in self improvement reflected by those who received the videoplayback. After only a few sessions of viewing themselves, the topic of their lunch time and break time conversations began to deal with self actualization themes, and as they began to get more positive videofeedback and their work behaviors improved, there was a generalized improvement in their apparent self concept.

It appears that the use of free choice, augmented with the technical support of playback techniques, may be a method for helping people from disadvantaged minority groups help themselves in a humane way.